

REMARKS

Claims 1-11, 14 and 16-24 are pending in the application. Claims 1-10 are allowed. In the Office Action of December 12, 2003, the Examiner made the following disposition:

- A.) Rejected claims 11, 14 and 16-22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over *Kamauchi et al.*
- B.) Rejected claims 23 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over *Kamauchi et al.* in view of *Sun*.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and address the Examiner's disposition as follows:

- A.) Rejection of claims 11, 14 and 17-22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over *Kamauchi et al.*:

Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejection.

In the Office Action of 12/12/2003, the Examiner withdrew the Examiner's argument that claims were recited in a product-by-process format. Applicants respectfully agree that the pending claims are method claims and are not product-by-process claims.

The Examiner also stated that the electrode and the gel electrolyte film are mutually distinct components. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner, as the claims clearly claim "an electrode including a rectangular electrode carrier and a gel electrolyte film." (See, claims 1, 11 and 25). Thus, the claimed electrode includes a gel electrolyte film and an electrode carrier. This is supported in the specification, for example, at Figure 5 and at page 9, lines 13-16 and at page 10, lines 3-5. In the illustrative example described in those passages, an illustrative negative electrode 3 includes a gel electrolyte film 4b and an electrode carrier 3a (referred to as "negative active material layer 3a").

Applicants' independent claim 11 has been amended to more clearly claim the method for producing a gel electrolyte cell.

Claims 1-11, 14 and 16-20 have been amended to correct informalities. Claims 1-10 have also been amended to more clearly claim the method.

Claims 21-24 have been canceled.

Claim 25 is newly added.

Independent claim 11, as amended, claims a method for producing a gel electrolyte cell. Similar to claim 1, which is allowed, claim 11 claims method steps of forming an electrode including a rectangular electrode carrier and a gel electrolyte film formed on the electrode carrier and having a width greater than the electrode carrier by:

- overlaying a first carrier having a greater width than the gel electrolyte film, a second carrier having a width approximately identical to that of the gel electrolyte film, and the electrode carrier in this order,

- applying an electrolyte composition onto the first carrier, the second carrier, and the electrode carrier which have been overlaid upon one another, in such a manner that the applied electrolyte composition has a width greater than the width of the second carrier and smaller than the width of the first carrier,

- peeling off, from the first carrier, the second carrier and the electrode carrier coated with the applied electrolyte composition,

- forming into the gel electrolyte film the electrolyte composition applied onto the second carrier and the electrode carrier which have been peeled off from the first carrier, and

- peeling off from the second carrier the electrode carrier and the gel electrolyte film formed of the electrolyte composition.

The method for producing the gel electrolyte cell further comprises producing the gel electrolyte cell including the formed electrode.

This is clearly unlike *Kamauchi et al.*, which fails to disclose or suggest Applicants' claimed method steps for forming the claimed electrode. Similar to claim 1, which is allowed, claim 11 claims method steps for forming an electrode, which method steps are not taught or suggested by *Kamauchi et al.*.

Thus, *Kamauchi et al.* fails to disclose or even suggest Applicants' claim 11.

Claims 14 and 16-20 depend directly or indirectly from claim 11 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 11 is allowable.

Claims 21-24 have been canceled.

Applicants respectfully submit the rejection has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

B.) Rejection of claims 23 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Kamauchi et al. in view of Sun:

Claims 23 and 24 have been canceled.

Applicants respectfully submit the rejection has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Claim 25 is newly added. In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 1-11, 14, 16-20 and 25 are patentable. It is therefore submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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